



COUNCIL MINUTES

January 29, 2009

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Study Session in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on January 29, 2009 at 7:30 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Scott Smith
Alex Finter
Dina Higgins
Kyle Jones
Dennis Kavanaugh
Dave Richins

COUNCIL ABSENT

Scott Somers

OFFICERS PRESENT

Christopher Brady
Debbie Spinner
Linda Crocker

Mayor Smith excused Councilmember Somers from the entire meeting, and he excused Vice Mayor Jones from the beginning of the meeting. Vice Mayor Jones arrived at 7:33 a.m.

1. Review items on the agenda for the February 2, 2009 Regular Council meeting.

All of the items on the agenda were reviewed among Council and staff and the following was noted:

Conflicts of interest declared: None

Items removed from the consent agenda: None

Items added to the consent agenda: None

2. Discuss and provide direction on the proposed Pawnshop and Secondhand Dealers Transaction Fee.

City Manager Christopher Brady noted that the ordinance for the proposed transaction fee is scheduled for introduction at the Regular Council meeting on Monday, February 2nd (agenda item 5b). He added that subject to Council approval of the introduction, the item would be considered for adoption by the Council at the February 17, 2009 Regular Council meeting. Mr. Brady said that staff was available to answer any questions.

Councilmember Finter said that although he supported the implementation of an electronic reporting system, he was reluctant to expand the ordinance to include secondhand stores. He suggested that the City should be proactive with secondhand stores by advising them of concerns that exist regarding certain transactions. He added that, if necessary, the Council could consider expanding the ordinance to include secondhand stores in the future.

In response to a question from Councilmember Higgins, Assistant Police Chief Mike Denney stated that the items to be reported by secondhand dealers include those that have a value of \$100 or more and items with an identifiable serial number. He added that the proposed ordinance is almost identical to the ordinance adopted by the City of Phoenix. Chief Denney advised that pawn shops are governed by State Statute and must report everything.

Responding to a question from Councilmember Richins, Assistant City Attorney Jack Shafer stated that the ordinance includes an exemption for items purchased from a residence.

In response to a suggestion from Councilmember Richins that staff provide an update to the Council in six months, Mr. Brady explained that staff must first initiate the procurement process to secure and implement the electronic system. He stated that once the system has been operational for a period of time, staff would provide an update to the Public Safety Committee.

Vice Mayor Jones explained that the primary objective was to implement electronic reporting as a measure to prevent the sale of stolen items.

Responding to a question from Mayor Smith, Chief Denney said that because secondhand dealers only report the transactions that are required by State Statute, the department is unable to determine if a problem exists.

Mayor Smith expressed concern that the proposed regulation may address a problem that does not exist.

Councilmember Richins stated the opinion that secondhand dealers should be included in the regulation because precious items are included in the State Statutes. He suggested that greater regulation of pawn shops would result in increased activity in secondhand operations.

Chief Denney explained that criminal intent and knowledge would have to be shown when charging an individual with a violation regarding an unreported sale of a precious item. He said that the proposal provides a framework in which to address the issue.

In response to a suggestion from Councilmember Finter that staff attempt to identify and document the existence of a problem before a regulation is adopted, Chief Denney advised that the Police Department has no legal right to inspect a secondhand dealer's inventory unless there is probable cause in a criminal case.

Councilmember Finter expressed concern that the impetus to extend the regulation to the secondhand dealers was the result of lobbying efforts by representatives of the pawn shops.

Mayor Smith thanked staff for the presentation.

3. Hear a presentation, discuss and provide direction on the development of a regional emergency transportation contract.

Fire Chief Harry Beck advised that staff is seeking direction regarding the development of a Regional Emergency Transportation Service contract with the Town of Gilbert, the City of Apache Junction and the Town of Queen Creek. He displayed a PowerPoint presentation (a copy is available for review in the City Clerk's Office) to provide an overview of the history of regional emergency transportation and the concept being proposed.

Assistant Fire Chief Mary Cameli continued the presentation by advising that the mission is to enhance customer service. She advised that a City-wide evaluation process was implemented and the department is attempting to address future service demands with innovation.

Chief Cameli outlined the following advantages of the proposal:

- Reduces response times.
- Provides seamless transportation without boundaries.
- Is consistent with Automatic Aid procedures.
- Provides a unified mission for the East Valley with units equipped and staffed in the same manner.
- Provides for continuity of medical care.
- Ensures quality control.

In response to a series of questions from Councilmember Richins, Chief Beck stated that all Fire Departments provide paramedic level response. He explained that some ambulance services do not provide paramedic backup on their units, which impacts the City's staffing levels when a Mesa paramedic must accompany a patient to the hospital. Chief Beck advised that the department has experienced this problem with the City of Tempe and the City of Chandler.

Councilmember Kavanaugh stated the opinion that the proposal for a regional plan was a natural progression of the automatic aid concept. He noted that the proposal is not intended to reflect poorly on the City's current provider, and he expressed support for the proposal.

Chief Beck confirmed that the City's current provider, Southwest Ambulance, provides excellent service to the City.

Chief Cameli noted that the four municipalities proposing to join in a regional contract are presently served by the same ambulance company. She noted that the same provider might not be in place in the future if each municipality pursues bids for these services on an individual basis.

Mayor Smith explained that the present system poses a problem for Mesa's units when responding to an automatic aid call in a neighboring community that has a lower service requirement for their ambulance service.

Chief Cameli noted that when a Mesa paramedic on an automatic aid call is required to accompany a patient to the hospital, the Mesa unit remains understaffed for that period of time. She added that a regional approach to ambulance service should minimize this type of situation. Chief Cameli said that although a regional concept was not identified when staff compared

ambulance service in cities of a similar size to Mesa, it was noted that Fresno and Oakland, California, have a similar approach by utilizing a county-wide ambulance system.

City Manager Christopher. Brady advised that Mesa and the other three municipalities are working together to prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP) for regional service. He noted that although the contracts held by each municipality has a different expiration date, each may terminate their agreements with notice and then be able to enter into the regional contract.

Responding to a question from Councilmember Richins, Chief Cameli said that although Southwest Ambulance and PMT (Professional Medical Transport) are two local providers, she noted that other providers could be interested in responding to the RFP because of the regional approach.

Mayor Smith noted that there was concurrence among the Councilmembers for staff to move forward to develop a regional proposal for ambulance service. He thanked staff for the presentation.

4. Hear a presentation and discuss the "4 for Mesa" flex work schedule pilot program.

Assistant to the City Manager Natalie Lewis introduced Human Resources Director Gary Manning and Technology and Innovation Manager Alex Deshuk. She displayed a PowerPoint presentation (a copy is available for review in the City Clerk's Office) to provide an overview of the proposal.

Ms. Lewis advised that Provo, Utah has successfully utilized this schedule for five years and that some of the benefits included extended customer service hours, energy savings and improved employee productivity. She stated that the "flex work" schedule was first suggested by Mesa employees, and she reported that the response to an online survey indicated that 72 percent of the respondents supported the compressed work week schedule.

In response to comments from Mayor Smith, Ms. Lewis clarified that employees would not receive additional holiday hours, but the hours for holidays that fall on a Friday or Saturday would be available for employees to utilize at their convenience.

Ms. Lewis stated that research indicates that employee retention and recruiting are key advantages to the work schedule. She noted that departments providing quality of life and essential services, such as solid waste and recycling pickup, libraries, cultural facilities, parks, and the Police and Fire Departments would remain open on Fridays.

Councilmember Kavanaugh said that his reservations and concerns were in regard to the impact on single parents, the potential for increased overtime costs, productivity and the impact on customer services. He noted that State, County and Federal offices and school district offices would be open five days a week.

Mr. Manning, responding to comments by Councilmember Higgins, advised that approximately 700 of the City's 2,300 non-sworn employees are presently on a 4 day, 10 hours a day work schedule. He noted that a study of this type of work schedule by Brigham Young University (BYU) indicated that 60 percent of the employees reported greater productivity and 60 percent of the residents reported improved citizen access.

Councilmember Higgins expressed concern that the proposed schedule would be difficult for older employees, and she suggested that employees have the option to participate.

Mr. Deshuk noted that tracking numerous flexible schedules would be very difficult. He stated that other jurisdictions in the Valley utilizing this schedule are closed for one day.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that staff is working with various departments to develop an efficient plan; that the proposal is a "pilot program;" that the survey was intended to gauge employee interest in the flexible schedule; and that the number of responses to the survey indicated a strong interest.

Councilmember Richins expressed support for the pilot program.

Councilmember Finter said his past experience with this type of schedule was very positive, and he said he would support the pilot program.

Mayor Smith commended staff for the proposal. He noted that because government is a service business, a satisfied workforce was a key element to providing excellent customer service. He added that most of the municipalities utilizing this schedule have had positive results, and he expressed support for implementing the pilot program.

Mr. Brady stated that staff would move forward with the plan to implement the "4 for Mesa" program beginning March 2, 2009. He said that the Council would receive periodic updates on the pilot program.

5. Acknowledge receipt of minutes of various boards and committees.

- a. Library Advisory Board meeting held November 18, 2008
- b. Transportation Advisory Board meeting held December 16, 2008

It was moved by Vice Mayor Jones, seconded by Councilmember Richins, that receipt of the above-referenced minutes be acknowledged.

Mayor Smith declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

6. Hear reports on meetings and/or conferences attended.

There were no reports on meetings and/or conferences attended.

7. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

City Manager Christopher Brady stated that the meeting schedule is as follows:

Monday, February 2, 2009, TBA – Study Session

Monday, February 2, 2009, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Session

Thursday, February 5, 2009, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Friday, February 6, 2009, 7:30 a.m. – Mayor's Breakfast at the Mesa Hilton Hotel

Monday, February 9, 2009, 4:00 p.m. – Intergovernmental Affairs Committee Meeting

Wednesday, February 11, 2009, 7:30 a.m. – Joint Meeting with the Dobson Ranch HOA

8. Items from citizens present.

There were no items from citizens present.

9. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 9:04 a.m.

SCOTT SMITH, MAYOR

ATTEST:

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Study Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 29th day of January, 2009. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK

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